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TAGS: PREL AO ZI

SUBJECT: ANGOLA CONCERNED DELAY IN ZIMBABWE VOTE RESULTS
COULD LEAD TO VIOLENCE

REF: LUANDA 254

Classified By: Ambassador Dan Mozena for Reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Foreign Relations Vice Minister Jorge Chicoti called Ambassador Mozena April 2 to convey Angola's "worry" over the continued delay in release of the results of Zimbabwe's presidential election. Chicoti said the GRA is internally grappling at the highest levels with how to handle the situation. The GRA is transmitting its concerns directly to the Government of Zimbabwe. Chicoti said his government will continue to observe the process and, as long as there is no violence, wait for the National Electoral Commission (NEC) to release the official results.

¶2. (C) Chicoti said the NEC, as an independent body, should not be subjected to pressure from the Zimbabwean government or other domestic or foreign actors. He acknowledged that the ZEC's failure to release the results is problematic, declaring that the longer the NEC remains silent, the more dangerous the situation becomes. Chicoti added that the NEC is already in violation of Zimbabwe's own laws, which require the release of electoral results within 48 hours.

¶3. (C) Chicoti said SADC is monitoring the situation in Zimbabwe (Note: Angola is chairing the SADC observation mission to Zimbabwe and is chair of the SADC Organ for Politics, Defense, and Security). Angola, Chicoti said, will "do what is appropriate" in consultations with SADC if the Zimbabwe situation takes a turn for the worse. A bit enigmatically, Chicoti said, "If one side says the results are unfair, we will be there."

¶4. (C) Ambassador Mozena suggested that the GRA could urge the Government of Zimbabwe to speak publicly to call for the ZEC to release the election results quickly. Chicoti agreed and said perhaps all political leaders should make a joint public call for the quick release of the election results.

¶5. (C) Comment: Angola was not prepared for the uncertain outcome unfolding in Zimbabwe; they had assumed Mugabe would win. The GRA is now rightly concerned at the prospect of violence in Zimbabwe and the potential for said violence to destabilize the region. Despite their concerns, the GRA has no plan for how to deal with any such violence, should it arise.

MOZENA